



State of Wisconsin
2021 - 2022 LEGISLATURE

LRB-5558/1
RJL:emw

2021 ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION 118

January 21, 2022 - Introduced by Representatives L. MYERS, ANDRACA, BALDEH, BOWEN, BROSTOFF, CONLEY, CONSIDINE, DRAKE, EMERSON, GOYKE, HEBL, HONG, MOORE OMOKUNDE, SHANKLAND, SHELTON, SINICKI, SNODGRASS, SPREITZER, SUBECK and VINING, cosponsored by Senators L. TAYLOR, RINGHAND, AGARD, JOHNSON, LARSON and ROYS. Referred to Committee on Rules.

1 **Relating to:** honoring the life and work of University of Wisconsin-Madison
2 graduate, bell hooks.

3 Whereas, on December 15, 2021, bell hooks, the acclaimed and prolific author,
4 poet, and scholar, passed away at the age of 69; and

5 Whereas, bell hooks was born as Gloria Jean Watkins on September 25, 1952,
6 in Hopkinsville, Kentucky, as the fourth of seven children; and

7 Whereas, bell hooks went by the pen name of bell hooks as a tribute to her
8 great-grandmother, Bell Blair Hooks, and chose to stylize her name in all lowercase
9 letters to emphasize the “substance of books, not who I am”; and

10 Whereas, bell hooks was a trailblazer in feminist and Black literature and
11 scholarship, known for her work addressing the intersections of gender, race, and
12 class and bringing the voices of Black and working-class women into the feminist
13 movement; and

1 Whereas, bell hooks’s work and ideas were largely inspired from her experience
2 growing up in a racially segregated town in rural Kentucky, having attended a
3 segregated school in her early childhood; and

4 Whereas, bell hooks discovered her love and talent for writing at a young age,
5 writing and memorizing poetry by the age of 10 and publishing her first poems in a
6 Sunday school magazine; and

7 Whereas, bell hooks was an alumnus of the University of Wisconsin-Madison,
8 having received a master’s degree in English in 1976; and

9 Whereas, bell hooks earned her bachelor’s degree from Stanford University and
10 her doctorate in literature from the University of California at Santa Cruz, where she
11 wrote her dissertation on Toni Morrison; and

12 Whereas, bell hooks published her first book, *And There We Wept*, in 1978 and
13 has authored over 30 books over the course of her career in a wide range of styles and
14 subjects, including literary criticism, memoir, poetry, and children’s literature; and

15 Whereas, bell hooks is lauded for her work on Black feminism, most notably,
16 *Ain’t I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism*, which hooks wrote at age 19 and
17 named after a speech by Black abolitionist and suffragist Sojourner Truth; the book
18 was named one of the “20 most influential women’s books of the last 20 years” by
19 *Publishers Weekly*; and

20 Whereas, bell hooks had an accomplished career in academia, having taught at
21 Stanford University, Yale University, Oberlin College, the City College of New York,
22 and Berea College in Kentucky; and

23 Whereas, bell hooks was named as a distinguished professor in residence in
24 Appalachian studies at Berea College in 2004, where she worked for the remainder
25 of her career; and

